



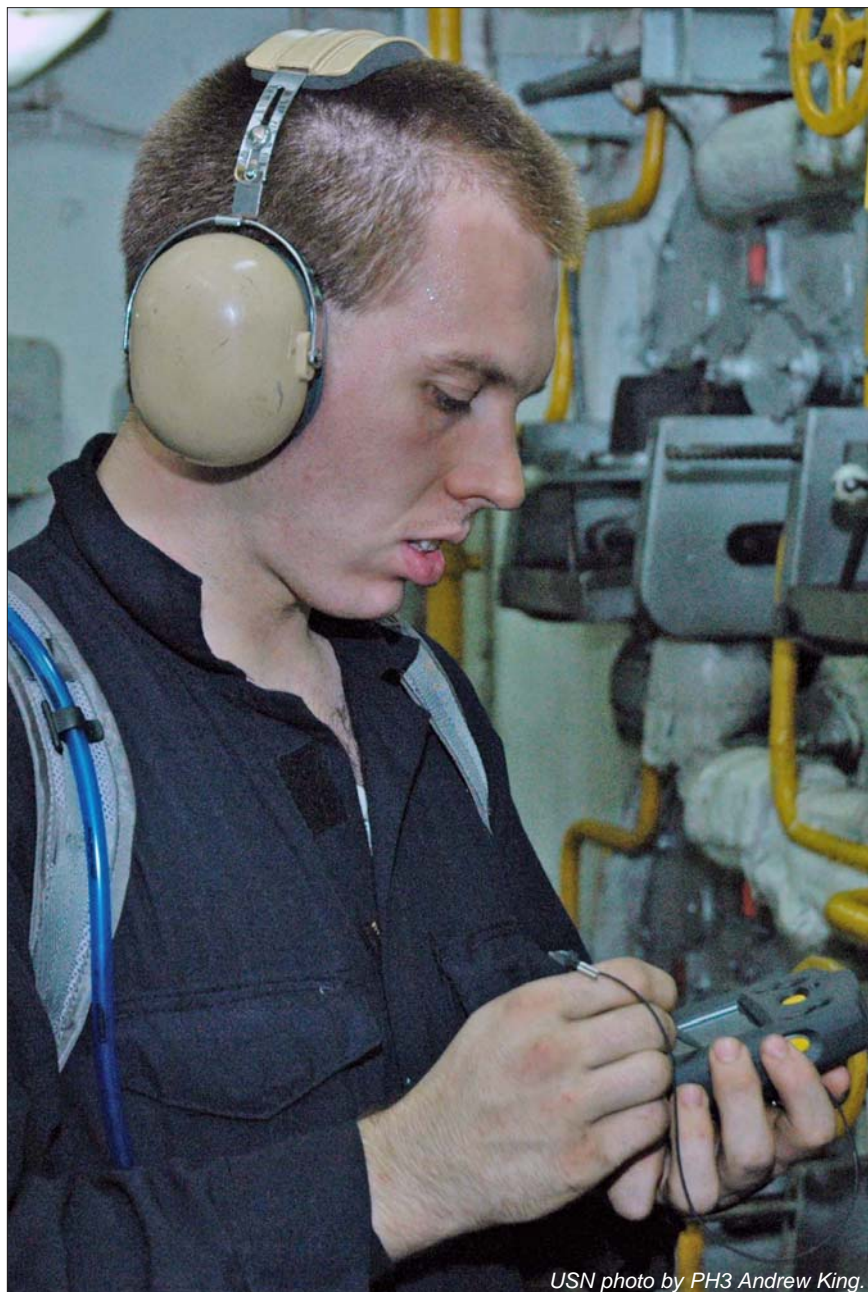
Gator Times

USS NASSAU (LHA 4)

March 3, 2006

Vol. 7, No. 5

Below The Waterline



USN photo by PH3 Andrew King.

MM3 Allen Forbes of Engineering's Main Propulsion 2 Division takes readings from the gauges on the AFT Main Machinery Room's Boiler. Forbes is one of many NASSAU Sailors that work long hours to keep NASSAU "steaming" 24 hours a day.

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As I See It

Support of Marines Continues on Station

By CMDCM(SW/AW) R. Makowski

As I am preparing this column for the Gator Times, we have had a very interesting last week. Our schedule has changed due to some operational changes, and we find ourselves playing the "wait and see" game.

This has also put a damper on our next scheduled port visit, but once again I say our job is to support our ground units and our country's interests. The good news for all, is that as of now this does not effect our scheduled return date. I bring the subject up to remind all that in the rapidly changing world that we live in, the reason we have a Navy is to provide that "any time-any where" capability for our Armed Forces.

Spring is in the air and NASCAR season has begun. That means this



A NASSAU Sailor leads members of her family across the flight deck during NASSAU's Tiger Cruise in May 2003. Current NASSAU Sailors will have the same opportunity to host their "Tigers" during the upcoming Tiger Cruise.

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Editorial Staff

Commanding Officer

CAPT M.W. Brannon

Executive Officer

CDR G.M. Boardman

Command Master Chief

CMDCM(SW/AW) Rick Makowski

Public Affairs Officer

LTJG April Bakken

Editor

JOC(SW/AW) Dean Lohmeyer

Staff Writers

JO1 Ardelle L. Purcell

JO3 Arif Patani

Photo Support

PH1(AW/SW) Brian McFadden

DM1 Charmin Covington

PH2(AW) Sue Milton

PH3 Andrew King

PHAN Amanda Clayton

PHAN Stephen Scott Smith

Printing

JO1(SW) Cindy Gill

LI3 Sean Stafford

month is advancement exam time for many of our Sailors. As I walk around the ship at night, I am pleased to see many of our Sailors spending what little free time they have studying for advancement. The time you spend now will pay benefits to you when the advancement results come back around June and many of you are advanced and enjoy the additional pay and another chevron. I would like to wish all of you good luck. Don't forget to study the Basic Military Requirements (BMR). For some of you it has been a while since you were last in Boot Camp, and you may have forgotten some of this information. BMR makes up 50 percent of your advancement test.

Tiger Cruise preparations are well under way. We intend to invite crewmembers' children over the age of 8 and moms, dads, sisters and brothers on a one day cruise (sorry no spouses, girlfriends or boyfriends allowed). This will allow them to experience the thrill of pulling in after a 6-month Deployment. Sign up sheets are available from the Chaplain, your department rep, or on the NASSAU website, www.nassau.navy

.mil (on board, use the link on the ship's internal website).

The cost for this event will be \$35 per guest, and must be paid in full by the service member when the application sheets are turned in. The price includes transportation, meals and a NASSAU ball cap. We do have limited space so sign your Tiger up now. We are limiting Sailors to a maximum of two guests without prior approval from the Executive Officer. We need to ensure that personnel expecting to get underway with us are medically fit, and can climb ladders. Please read all the forms closely before you sign someone up.

As I close this column, I would like to bring the crew's attention to the celebration of Women's History Month, this month we will have several events as we raise the crew's awareness of the many accomplishments of women in America's history and the military.

As always please continue to double your efforts to concentrate on the job at hand, pay attention and complete the job the right way the first time.

Until next time take care and God Bless.

Tiger Cruise Is On!

By Chaplain Karl Lindblad

Welcome Tigers!
We are approved to conduct a Tiger Cruise for families and friends on our return to port.

Tiger Cruise is the code name for a long-standing tradition in the Navy for a very special guest program. Ships returning from deployment are permitted to embark guests and relatives of crewmembers, "Tigers," while transiting on the last leg of a deployment. This generally occurs in the final days of cruise with arrival at homeport. It provides an opportunity for Sailors and Marines to exhibit their professionalism, their ship and its various capabilities.

In February 2006, Commander Second Fleet approved the Tiger Cruise and sent guidance messages to appropriate ships and commands.

Participants should be in generally good health and have the ability to negotiate the winding passageways and steep ladderwells found aboard NASSAU. For example one must be able to continuously climb three ladder wells, a rise of 30 feet, without stopping. Additionally, NASSAU's Medical Department is only designed to provide stabilization medical care and transport off ship in the event of a medical emergency. Regrettably those visitors who have difficulty fulfilling these requirements are not permitted to embark on this cruise. We hope that they might be able to visit sometime when the ship is pier side in Norfolk.

Sponsors need to fill out an Application and Medical release form which can be obtained from either the Tiger Cruise Coordinator's office or download from the NASSAU website at <http://www.nassau.navy.mil>. Sailors on board NASSAU can download the form from the external website by following the link located on the Intranet website.

After downloading the form, please do the following:

a. Fill out and sign all appropriate blocks. Please note that a proper and complete medical questionnaire will have a combination of yes and no answers, not all no or all yes.

b. Scan and attach the form to an e-mail. Make sure the printed scan size is the same as the original 8.5 x 11.

c. Send the entire application as an e-mail attachment to your sponsor. They will print it out and bring it to the Tiger Cruise office with \$35 per Tiger, payable only by the sponsor and due no later than March 24.

We have a wonderful team of crewmember volunteers. They really desire to help families participate in the daily shipboard routine. Some great activities are planned to show how NASSAU operates. Tigers will be given the opportunity to experience some of our drills and ship repair functions (prepare to get wet!). Helicopter static displays and flyovers are planned as well. The big concerns right now are safety and transportation so we need all Tigers to follow directions and be patient.

are constantly asking how they can help their Tigers have a safe and fun experience. Many crewmembers tell me that their families do not really know what Sailors and Marines do on a deployment; so they look forward to helping their Tigers get the experience of riding a ship.

This is expected to bring a lot of excitement and fun to the crew. A lot of fun of the Tiger Cruise is experiencing the challenge of sleeping in berthing. Remember not to sit up too quickly in the 'rack,' or you will hit your head on the rack above you. We live in close quarters (separated by gender), but you really get to know your neighbor and their sleeping habits! We have some terrific food on the 'chow' lines and awesome views of nature and the mag-

Chaplain's Corner



nificent power of a mighty warship.

One thing everyone needs to keep in mind is that life changes and so can times and dates. While the Tiger Cruise date has been set there is no promise that it will happen on that day should operational commitments change. Safety and timeliness are always uppermost in our minds.

Walk, do not run. Watch out for gear bolted to the walls (bulkheads). Falling on non-skid is no fun. Did I mention to walk? Watch your head, tuck in your wings. Walk, do not run. See the web site listed above for details and review our newsletters.

Here are a few items to bring on the day of the trip:

- ✓ Sunscreen, windbreakers and long pants/skirts. Transfer to the ship is by landing craft, so chilly temperatures and/or water spray may be a factor;

- ✓ snacks and water for the four hour bus ride;

- ✓ an overnight bag or backpack. Pack light since its only one night aboard;

- ✓ bring cash for the Ship's Store. Checks are only accepted from sponsors;

- ✓ you may want to bring a padlock to secure assigned lockers and valuables; and

- ✓ arrive early to all scheduled times.

Oh, one other thing...enjoy yourself!

Worth Repeating

"Use the talents you possess, for the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except the best."
Henry Van Dyke

"Late to Bed, Early to Rise; Work like Hell, and You'll be Wise."
Hyman G. Rickover, Father of the U.S. Nuclear Navy

"I'm an idealist. I don't know where I'm going, but I'm on my way."
Carl Sandburg

"Dream as if you'll live forever, live as if you'll die today."
James Dean

"Success is a matter of luck. Ask any failure."
Earl Wilson



Life in the Pits

Engineers Keep the Ship Steaming Along



DCFN Brian Perry checks the gauges in Main Control during his watch.

By JO1 Ardelle L. Purcell

In the very bottom of the 20 story high Mighty Warship NASSAU, inside one of her 1,400 compartments spread throughout her 820 feet, where temperatures sometimes reach a sweltering 125 degrees, Sailors in the Engineering Department's Aft Main Machinery Room (MMR) work around the clock to keep NASSAU steaming through the seas.

Tasked with the job of maintaining one of two steam propulsion plants, NASSAU's Engineers are responsible for aligning piping systems for oil, water, air and steam, and controlling the operation of the ship boilers and steam turbines used for propulsion and service systems. They also control the operation of the turbine generators

used to produce electrical power, and maintain the distilling plant that turns salt water into fresh water.

"We are the heart and soul of the ship," said MM2(SW) Elliot Falcon, the Aft MMR work center supervisor. "We operate a 700 pound boiler to provide steam to the main engine. Without steam we couldn't move through the water, we wouldn't have hot water to wash or cook with, and we wouldn't have any electricity. Without us this ship is a useless shell," he said.

With an electrical power subsystem capable of creating 14,000 kilowatts of power to the ship, NASSAU has enough electrical power to light 11,500 homes for 50,000 people.

MM3 Erick Garcia is one of several Sailors who work hard to maintain electricity throughout the ship.

"I do maintenance on our different types of equipment," said Garcia. "I work with the steam driven turbines, the distilling plant, pumps, valves and the low pressure air compressors. I operate and ensure all the equipment is running within parameters."

The AFT MMR is also known to NASSAU Sailors as "the pit" or "the hole" because of its location below the waterline. The constant watch on temperature gauges and burners, and ensuring the six tanks that make more than 2,800 gallons of potable water an hour are working properly is an exhausting feat. An engineer's normal work day averages between 15 and 18 hours, consisting of two six hour watches and a regular workday.

"The biggest challenge I go through is the lack of sleep, not to com-

plain or anything because it's one part of my rate that you can't get around," said Garcia. "Sometimes I feel very tired and exhausted, but I maintain my edge, not only for myself, but for my shipmates and country. It makes me proud I am a part of something so unique every single day. I feel I have done something that makes my life worthwhile."

With the mission to embark, deploy and land a Marine landing force through a combination of methods, the main focus is to get the force to the appointed location on time. Despite her age, NASSAU has been successful because of her not so selfish Sailors.

"The hardest thing about working in Engineering in my opinion is finding time for yourself," said MMC(SW/AW) Travis Saylor, Aft MMR's Leading Chief Petty Officer. "We face a lot of difficulties on a daily basis, from steam leaks and heat stress to fuel leaks. There is a constant work load which is attributed to a 27-year-old ship with minimal manning."

According to Saylor, no matter what the engineers try to do to stay ahead of the game, there is always something that needs to be repaired or some kind of inspection to prepare for.

"Most of the time you just clean up, eat and go to sleep," said Saylor. "That way you have enough strength to do it all over again the next day."

There is constant movement by Sailors in "the pit," repeating terms and phrases back and forth to one another for clarity, ensuring the water tanks stay at a steady level, the boilers remain lit and the shaft is continuously rotating so that NASSAU can continue moving through the water while on deployment. While this task sounds difficult, the best part about being a NASSAU engineer is yet to come.

"The best part about my job has not happened yet," said Falcon. "When we get back to Norfolk and I can look at everyone hugging their family, then I can say I did my part to help this ship and crew get back safely."

MM3 Lamar Henderson checks the power gauges on the No. 4 Ship's Service Turbine Generator (SSTG). MP2 engineers conduct roving watches on an hourly basis to ensure all engineering equipment is in proper working order. Catching problems early helps the engineers correct small problems before they become large problems that affect the entire crew.



MM3 Jimmy Maxwell chips the paint off the port side shaft support bearing to prepare the support bearing for repainting. Preventive maintenance is important in a machinery space on a ship as old as NASSAU.



Gator In The Spotlight

HM3(SW) Jakarta Crafton

Navy experience: 4 years
Time on board: 18 months
Hometown: Glen Arden, Md.

Why did you decide to enlist in the Navy?

It was an opportunity for me to prove myself, and to prove that I could do whatever I put my mind to. I wanted to make my mom and dad proud because I was not the best child growing up. I also wanted to show younger people around me that you don't need to sell drugs to be successful.

Why did you choose the medical field?

Ever since I was 3 years old, I wanted to be a doctor. I would watch the Cosby Show on television and think I wanted to be the character that the father played, a doctor.

What are your duties in Medical?

I am the only Aerospace Medical Technician onboard. I work mainly with pilots, air crew personnel and the Air Department. I take care of patients for all physical exams done



HM3(SW) Jakarta Crafton wants to show younger people that you don't have to sell drugs to be successful.

on the ship for personnel submitting for Special Warfare packages and officer packages.

What do you like most about NASSAU Medical Department?

The best part is that we get to meet and greet people and get to know people and who they are. I get to hear about people's jobs, and of course I like to help them feel better. The people I work with are professional and knowledgeable.

What advice would you give to other junior Sailors?

If you see something that needs to be done, just take the initiative and do it. Pick up that piece of trash, help that other person that needs it but doesn't want to ask for help. Don't be that person who doesn't care.

Who is your role model?

Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr., because he was a non-violent man. I grew up in a violent soci-

ety and I have seen people get shot and in different harmful situations. I believe that you don't need to be violent to make things happen and be successful.

What are your hobbies?

I like to read anything I can get my hands on, anything inspirational. I write Rhythm and Blues music. I guess I could say that education is one of my hobbies.

What is your most memorable moment in the Navy?

I was stationed in Thailand with the 31st MEU. I was in a convoy and the lead truck in the convoy had a head-on collision with a Thailand national vehicle. I went to go assess the scene and there was a man lying on the ground with his leg bent back and it was too far back to be normal. I treated him as a trauma patient and knew that it would up as a partial leg amputation. I used two tent poles and some rope to immobilize his leg.

Division In The Spotlight

Main Propulsion 1 (MP1)



Department: Engineering

Location: Main Control

Personnel: One Division Officer, One Division LCPO, and 27 Sailors

Ratings: Machinist Mates (MM), Enginemen (EN) and Damage Controlmen (DC)

What They Do:

MP1 has the responsibility of maintaining the main propulsion engines and the ship's turbine generators. They operate the distilling plants that turn salt water into potable water for the crew and provides feed water to the boilers. They provide all the electricity and steam for the ship including steam to run the ship's laundry and for the many hot water heaters located throughout the ship.

What people think they do:

Unless Sailors come down for ESWS signatures, not many know what goes on in MP1. One thing is for sure, though ... everyone knows

they sweat (the average temperature in MP1 runs about 135-140 degrees, which is about 10 degrees hotter than the Aft Main Machinery Room (Aft MMR, or MP2).

What are the highlights of working in MP1:

If the engineers in this division are not doing their job correctly, the ship is little more than a hunk of metal floating on the water. MP1 has a strong sense of camaraderie. Sailors in "The Pit" are known to work many long hours in a hot environment.

When something breaks, there is no sleep until the problem is fixed. MP1 engineers feel as though can fix everything that happens in their division, and no challenge is too big.

On a typical day...

Maintaining a nearly 27-year-old ship is a daily evolution. The Engineers of MP1 stand two six-hour watches per day and still work a regu-

lar work day in between watches. They really don't have a "typical day" since anything can happen at any time.

An unusual event can easily take what may have been considered a typical day and turn it into a very atypical day in seconds.

Maintenance and upkeep in this division is a much greater challenge than in some other divisions due to the age of the ship. They are constantly finding things that need to be repaired or overhauled simply due to parts wearing out over the course of time.

They conduct hourly roving watches in five spaces. During these watches, they check more than 300 gauges and more than 30 pieces of major equipment, ensuring everything is in proper working order at all times.

If something out of the ordinary is found, maintenance is conducted immediately to repair or replace the piece of equipment.

UTR Bridges Gap Between Parent and Child

By PHAN Steven Scott Smith

With Sailors being deployed for long periods of time, the Family Literacy Foundation is helping to ease the fear and anxiety felt by children in military families through the United Through Reading (UTR) program.

UTR, a not-for profit organization created by Navy spouse Betty Mohlenbrock, was designed to unite deployed military parents and their children through taped book readings. The videos are then copied to DVD and mailed to families "back home."

UTR has been a popular activity with many Sailors aboard NASSAU, with many crewmembers participating on a regular basis.

More than 250 Sailors aboard NASSAU have taken advantage of the program, many more than once.

"What a great program," said LCDR Marcus Starks, NASSAU's Senior Intelligence Officer. "I often read to my children at night before they went to bed, but while deployed my children have been so confused about when Daddy's coming home or why Daddy is at work so long. I see United Through Reading as a way to reach out to my family and give my kids a taste of normalcy even just a moment."

Many families read to their children on a daily basis, but when duty calls it becomes difficult not only for the child, but also the deployed family member. That's where UTR steps in, allowing parents to have their presence felt at home. The voice of a parent combined with his or her image on the TV screen strengthens the relationship between parent and child while teaching the joy of reading.

The program is simple. Parents select a book to read, they receive simple instructions on what they can or cannot say on the video, and then are recorded as they read the book. The DVD is then provided to the member, who mails it home. The cost is only one dollar, which offsets the cost of materials and is given to MWR.



The United Through Reading program helps LCDR Marcus Starks stay in touch with his sons Marcus, Justice, Kennedy and Lucus while on deployment.

"I then tell them to look into the camera like they are looking at their child, which some of them find very hard to do," said Kennelly. "Then I give them some privacy to do their reading."

"While the child is watching, the parent or caregiver at home can use a camcorder or camera to record the child's reaction," said RP1(SW) Lyon Kennelly, NASSAU's UTR Coordinator. "The recording is then sent back to the deployed service member completing a full circle and encouraging continued participation."

The voice of a parent is an important factor in a child's life and reading not only elevates a child's ability to learn but allows a mutual connection through the bond of sharing a story together.

UTR serves as a very simple and easy morale booster and brings many families together through the love of reading. And a love of reading leads to a love of learning, and that is one of the greatest gifts a child can receive.

NASSAU's UTR volunteers are: NC1(SW) Jenny O'Leary, PS2(SW) Savin Chea, AM1 Kevin Reilly, AC2 Elyse Harvey, ABFAA Bobby Williams, BM2 Patrice Freeman, AM3(AW) Glynn Koepke and BM2(SW/AW) Greg

Drerup. They stand by to help whenever Kennelly is not available for the taping.

Those interested in participating should make an appointment with Kennelly soon. Tapings are conducted Mondays from 0900-1100, Tuesdays 1300-1500, and Thursdays 1830-2100. Tapings will end at the end of March, and appointments are already booked through March 20. For more information, call 5255.

Bravo Zulu

CMC's Super Sailors Of The Day

17 Feb – ADAN Elvis Chavez (AIMD)
18 Feb – SKSN Jeison Aristazabal (Sep.)
19 Feb – HM3 Elizabeth Esquivl (Med.)
20 Feb – IT3 Christopher Rugile (C5I)
21 Feb – MM3 Westley Zatocil (Eng.)
22 Feb – ABFAN Jonathan Weber (Air)
23 Feb – AOAN Ronald Pierre (Weps)
24 Feb – SN Rainez Renchavez (Deck)
25 Feb – CSSN Jon-Eric Divis (Supply)
26 Feb – SN William Mills (Training)
27 Feb – IT3 Michael Bartholomew (C5I)
28 Feb – DCFN Anthony Abrao (Eng.)
1 Mar – ABHAN Charles Jones (Air)
2 Mar – IS3 Alston Feaster (OPS)
3 Mar – SN Anderson Navarette (Deck)